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A Yellow Rose

By MRS. H. H. PENROSE.

Puck looked out of the breakfast-room window and made faces at Captain Charlton, who beckoned and held up a gaily bedizened box of chocolates. For some weeks past he had found it expedient to lay in a stock of such boxes for purposes of bribery and corruption.

Puck shook her head. She knew that he was dreadfully anxious for her to come out, and she had no idea of making her services too cheap. He was waiting on the lawn for the dogcart to come round to drive him to the station. He had breakfast alone, and he had his own reasons for not wishing to enter the house again. He wanted an undisturbed interview with Puck. He balanced half a crown very enticingly on the edge of the chocolate box.

Puck disappeared from the window, and was standing beside him within sixty seconds. The half-crown was transferred to her pocket with astonishing rapidity.

"I wanted that badly," she remarked, with a grave nod.

He proffered the box.

"I haven't had time to get through the last three yet," she said, accepting it with kindly indifference, "but it may be useful later on. I'm waiting to know what you want."

The knowledge of the world which she had accumulated in the course of nine years was quite surprising.

"Look here!" began Captain Charlton, and hesitated.

"I'm looking," said Puck. "I've been looking all the time."

He took a deep red rose from his buttonhole—a beautiful rose, just breaking from the bud.

"I want you to give that, and this note, to—"

"To Hilda, of course. Why do you make such a fuss about saying her name?"

"I'm not making a fuss about anything, Puck. Don't wait until she comes down to breakfast, you understand. Take them up to her room now, at once; and don't let anyone see you on the way. Here's the dogcart, and not a minute to spare."

"I'll drive with you to the station. No one will miss me."

Despair seized him.

"Puck," he said solemnly, "I'm going to town for the day, and I'll buy you anything you like to mention if you'll only go and do my message without another moment's delay."

"Stop!" she screamed, as he sprang into the dogcart. "You're not giving me time to mention it."

"Well," he asked over his shoulder.

"A diamond tiara or a tricycle—you may take your choice. I'm very easily pleased."

She waved the rose at him as he drove off, and turned leisurely toward the house. Her pet puppy ran out to meet her, leaping and barking. She waved the rose at him, too; and, taking the gesture for an intimation that he was to make himself at home with a new plaything, he jumped up, and with one snap appropriated the head, leaving the stem in Puck's hand. A few red leaves were strewn about the lawn, but the bulk of the flower was promptly bolted by Wallypug. Puck gasped. He'll be just raging," she muttered; "and I'll get neither the tiara nor the tricycle." Then her face cleared. An idea, brilliant in its simplicity had occurred to her.

"One rose is as good as another," she said, and pulled a staring, full-blown Gloire-de-Dijon from the nearest tree. There were delicate flesh-tinted blossoms on the same branch, but this one was an uncompromising yellow in the outer leaves, and neither in form nor color a perfect specimen of its kind. Puck was not discriminating in the matter of flowers.

She ran into the house and up to her sister's room, on the door of which she beat a tattoo with impressive energy.

Hilda had been at a dinner party and dance the night before, and gave the word of admission in a sleepy voice.

Puck came in with her hands behind her back.

"You ought to be jolly well ashamed of yourself," she said, severely. "Not out of bed yet, and it's nearly 9 o'clock."

"Shocking, isn't it?" said Hilda, with gentle toleration. "But I wasn't in bed until 3, and then I didn't go to sleep for hours and hours."

"Well, why didn't you?"

"Oh, I don't know! I suppose I was thinking of things."

"Things of this sort?" asked Puck, bringing the letter and flower into view.

Hilda's sleepiness vanished instantly. She sat up, pushing her fair, curly hair out of her eyes.

"Puck, darling," she said, "give them to me at once, like a dear, good child."

"Make a fair offer," said Puck, whose business dealings were not of a circumscribed nature.

"Anything you like, but give—give!"

"Didn't the horse-leech's daughter say that?" Puck inquired, holding back in a tantalizing manner. "Father says one ought not to repeat other people's remarks, and try to pass them off as original."

"Oh, Puck, do hurry. If you don't you shan't have anything at all."

Puck seized the handle of the door, and in a moment Hilda's bare feet were flying over the floor. A skirmish ensued; the letter and rose were taken possession of "by brute force," as Puck asserted with a dramatic gesture; Puck herself was bundled out of the room, and the key was turned in the lock.

Then Hilda tore open her letter, and read many burning words. She had been interrupted at the beginning of the important conversation with Captain Charlton the night before, and he, feeling that he could not run the risk of other interruptions, had written to her in the small hours.

"I have always felt," he said, "that an officer's first duty is to his own regiment, and that he should remain with it, taking his chance of humdrum work or desirable active service. But if you refuse me, I know I shall not have the courage to remain here, where I may see you constantly. Right or wrong, I shall volunteer for Africa, and think myself fortunate if I have the luck to do a day's work under Kitchener. Possibly your father will blame me, but you will understand. Still, I don't think it will happen. I think you care a little. I believe if there had been time last night you would have given me a word of hope. I trust your eyes. Only I dare not be confident because I know how small are my deserts, and I want to be sure of my fate the first moment I see you again. I can wait no longer. You have promised to be at the Uffington's ball to-night. If you mean 'Yes,' wear the rose I send you with this by Puck."

There was a great deal more, but that was the important part of the letter.

Hilda took up the rose from her knee, and examined it with a smile of the tenderest derision.

"I don't think it will fall to pieces before evening," she muttered doubtfully. "But what a color!" She stood before the looking glass in her dainty night gear, and held the yellow leaves against her yellow hair. "Fancy choosing that rose for me to wear! He requires a great deal of instruction." Then she kissed it, and put it in water with extreme carefulness.

"If it were a dandelion," she said, "I would wear it—for him."

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Colonel Weatherley was not in the best possible humor that morning, and had a snarl ready for the world in general—a snarl that became particularly vicious when reference was made to certain of his officers who had just volunteered for active service.

"I believe," he growled, "that Charlton is the only man in the regiment who sees with me the absolute immorality of the practice. If the underlying idea was carried out to its logical conclusion, the service would fall to pieces. This volunteering destroys esprit-de-corps; it is merely the outcome of restlessness and personal ambition. Personal ambition should not exist in the service. A man should never regard himself otherwise than as part of his regiment."

"I suppose if he's the head part he doesn't mind," said Puck, with her elbows on the table.

Colonel Weatherley endeavored to fix her with a stony stare, but she was not to be fixed.

"Captain Charlton went up to London this morning," she said, with disturbing intent. "Perhaps he's on his way to the fighting, too."

"Don't talk about what you don't understand, child," said her mother.

"Don't talk about anything," said her father. "Eat your breakfast."

"I've eaten it," said Puck, the irrepressible. "I'll begin again if you like, but I'm afraid if I do I shall be ill."

"You'd better run away if you can't be silent," said Mrs. Weatherley, nervously. "Why," she inquired of the tea-pot, as Puck vanished, "are children so different? Hilda never gave me any trouble at that age. I don't understand it."

"If I remember rightly," said Hilda, "you never spoilt me as you spoil Puck."

"What an unkind thing to say to your own mother, Hilda! I spoilt you as well as I knew how, but I wasn't used to children then."

"Dear mother, I shall never cease to be grateful to you for not having spoilt me. I doubt if Puck will ever be so grateful to you for the reverse."

"She's a dear, affectionate child, and so impulsive," said Mrs. Weatherley, with a plaintive emphasis. "She never asks me for anything without kissing me in the sweetest manner."

"I haven't noticed her kissing you when she doesn't ask for anything," observed Colonel Weatherley, cynically. "No doubt she'll be a charming person to live with in ten years' time."

"Why did Captain Charlton sleep and breakfast here?" asked Mrs. Weatherley, making an unwise choice of a fresh subject.

"Because I asked him," snapped the colonel.

"It was dreadfully late, you know, mother, when we got home last night and Captain Charlton drove with us. It would have been heartless to let him go on to the camp."

Hilda blushed furiously as she spoke and her father glanced at her with a twinkle of very grim humor in his steel gray eyes. He guessed how the land lay, and he approved of Captain Charlton, which explained a good many things.

"I suppose you are going to drag me out again to-night," he said. "There's a dance on at the Uffingtons, isn't there?"

"Would it make any difference if I did?"

"Certainly it would. I'd coax mother to take me instead. No, I'd get Puck to coax her."

"That would be a failure. Puck can only coax on her own account. Never mind. I'll take you. A man can die but once."

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Twelve hours later Hilda Weatherley was standing in Lady Uffington's ballroom, paying scant attention to a crowd of would-be partners who hovered about her. She wanted to reserve all her waltzes for Captain Charlton who was coming towards her at that moment. He had only just arrived, and she waited for him, palpitating and glowing. The yellow rose was fastened conspicuously at the left side of her bodice; and, that there might be no mistake about it, she wore no other flowers. She felt every step of his progress across the room, with her eyes fixed demurely on her card, and she knew that, within six feet of her, he paused suddenly.

Then she looked up, and the smile of encouragement was frozen upon her lips.

He was staring at her, staring at the rose, with a look in his eyes that she had never seen before. His face was white and set. Already one or two people had turned to look at him. Hilda tried to speak—to say his name and give a common-place greeting in an ordinary tone, but her tongue was momentarily paralyzed by an undefined fear, and before her first word was formed, Captain Charlton turned away to recross the room. She watched him go with an overwhelming sense of misunderstanding, saw him draw Colonel Weatherley aside, and followed the two men with her wide, frightened eyes as they left the room togetner.

"You are feeling faint," said the man standing nearest her. "Let me find some cooler place for you."

She took his arm without any volition of her own, and he led her to an ante-room with a wide-open window. She refused wine, pleading a headache, and begged him to leave her alone.

She sank on the window-seat, partly hidden by curtains, and escaped observation until her father, after fruitless searching everywhere, caught a glimpse of her dress and decended on her.

"Alone?" he asked in evident surprise as he drew aside the curtain. "What on earth are you doing here, Hilda?"

"Only resting. I was not—not very well. Shall we go home?

"Presently. I want to ask you something first."

He took the vacant seat opposite to hers, and passing couples who saw the man's foot protruding from beneath one curtain, and the toe of a white shoe from beneath the other, concluded rightly that very serious business was being transacted beside that open window.

"I want to know," said Colonel Weatherley, "what you mean by playing fast and loose with Charlton?"

"Has he said that I have done so?" asked Hilda, with a sudden access of dignity.

Colonel Weatherley saw her eyes blazing in the half-light.

"Certainly not," he said; "but I can judge for myself. Up to yesterday you and he were behaving almost like an engaged couple. To-night the young fool comes and tells me that he is going to save Kitchener the trouble of taking Khartum. At least he means to offer, and if Kitchener won't have him, he is going to exchange into another regiment. Whatever happens, he won't stay where he is."

"Did he give any reason?" asked Hilda, relapsing into a weak tone.

"He said something vague about a disappointment, but not until I pressed him. You ought to be ashamed of yourself—that's all I can say."

"You think that I have refused him," said Hilda, steadying her voice by a great effort. "I have not. He asked me—in a letter—this morning. I have neither written to him nor spoken to him since."

"Did he ask you to write?" Colonel Weatherley was softening over her evident distress.

"No."

"Then what did he ask you to do—I mean in the way of answering him?"

"To wear a rose he sent me with the letter. And I am wearing it. Oh, father, there is some dreadful misunderstanding!"

Her father took her hand and held it. He was not often demonstrative. "Who brought you the rose and letter?" he asked sharply.

"Puck."

"Then there's some deviltry at the bottom of it. We mustn't let him leave us, Hilda, for want of an explanation. He went back to Aldershot an hour ago. Probably he is writing to the War Office this minute—"

"Then there is no time to be proud," said Hilda, seizing him by the arm. "You must go and stop him. You must bring him to me. Drive straight to the barracks. I will go home and wait for you."

She had not long to wait, but it seemed long to her. Mrs. Weatherley had gone to bed early. Only one servant was astir, and that one looked respectfully puzzled when Miss Weatherley arrived alone. But there was a bright fire in the drawing room, burning for cheerfulness rather than warmth, and Hilda crouched beside it, glad of the company even of live coals. Presently she heard welcome sounds; her father came into the room alone, and she sprang up to meet him, trembling all over.

"He won't be persuaded that there can be any mistake," said Colonel Weatherley; "but he is here. Shall I send him to you?"

"Yes, oh, yes!" she said, and almost fell into the nearest chair.

Then Colonel Weatherley left her, and after the passing of an interminable minute the door opened and closed again. Captain Charlton came and stood before her, but the hard, white look had not left his face, and again the words died in her throat when she tried to speak.

"I am sorry you have been annoyed on my account," he said, icily. "I quite understand how it is. Colonel Weatherly is kind enough to dislike the idea of my leaving the regiment. He has guessed more than I intended, and he has persuaded you to reconsider your decision. You have sent for me only to please him, and I have come only to set your mind at rest—to assure you that I am not the man to profit by a forced consent."

"You are quite mistaken," Hilda faltered. "And I have no idea where the misunderstanding lies. You asked me to answer you by wearing your flower—"

"And you did not wear it. That was my answer."

"But I did wear it," cried Hilda, the color that had died away rushing into her cheeks again.

Captain Charlton's eyebrows went up. Hilda had never before seen him look thoroughly disagreeable, and she shrank from the revelation of another side to his character.

"You go far to please your father, Miss Weatherly," he said, every word cutting like a knife. "It will be a relief to you to find that, much as I respect any assertion coming from you, I still prefer the evidence of my own senses. I suppose you have done what you believe to be your duty, but I cannot bear much more of it. Let me say good-night and good-bye."

Even then, perhaps, if Hilda had held the hand he offered to her, and said the words "I love you," he would have believed her against every other evidence, and perhaps an older woman would have seized the one remaining chance of saving two hearts from breaking; but Hilda was very young, and already her shy pride had been sorely violated. She felt that she had gone more than half way towards an understanding, and that she could go no further. She only touched his hand mechanically as he touched hers, and he left her without another word.

She was almost unconscious when her father returned to her more distressed and puzzled than before. He made her drink some wine, and had the wisdom to hurry her to bed; but he came to her again as she lay awake and tearless, staring at the moonlight on the wall, and he sat beside her until daybreak.

"I don't know what to make of it all," he said. "I'm afraid it's something very like temporary insanity. The poor fellow is laboring under some crazy delusion that I am trying to force you to marry him against your will. When he was leaving he assured me that you had done everything I could have wished, and begged me not to trouble you any more. What midsummer madness!"

"He talked like that to me, too," said Hilda, and her voice had taken, oh! such a flat, hopeless tone. She was living through her first trouble, and it seemed to her that the end of all things was at hand. "He said I had sent for him to please you, and he almost sneered at me when I said that I had worn his flower. It seemed that he did not believe it, although the flower was still in my dress, and he was looking at it."

"You said Puck brought it to you, didn't you? I'll be bound she could explain the mystery if she liked. I'll swear she's at the bottom of it. She wakes early. I'll go to her room as soon as I hear the servants stirring, and I'll make her tell me all she knows."

"You are very good, but it won't be any use," said Hilda, in the same dull, level tone. "Nothing will ever make any difference now. Do go and try to get some sleep, father. You will be so tired. Don't mind about me. I suppose people go on living no matter what happens—and that is just the worst of it."

He did not contradict her despair, because he remembered how he had once entertained the same feelings himself, although that was a long time ago. He, too, had once thought that nothing could make any difference, and that life was a curse, and he knew that no one could have persuaded him to a contrary opinion then. He had learned in the course of years that life holds many things worth considering besides the one great passion that comes to nearly every man and woman of strong and deep nature, and he had full confidence that his daughter would learn the same lesson; but he respected her young sorrow too much to preach to it. Those children are fortunate whose parents have the gift of remembering their own youth with a just appreciation of the magnitude of its emotions.

Puck, unconscious of the havoc she had wrought, was just thinking of getting out of bed at half past six o'clock when she heard a knock at her door, which she answered with a guilty affectation of sleepiness. She liked it to be understood by the household that she got up early because she was virtuous and self-denying, not because she liked to enjoy the morning hours undisturbed by those in authority over her.

She was somewhat more than surprised to see her father enter, and quite overwhelmed by a sense of approaching catastrophe when he brought a chair to the side of her bed and sat down. She had sufficient courage to treat him with a considerable amount of flippancy in the presence of others, but as a rule she avoided being alone with him. She was afraid of him; and still more afraid that he would find it out.

"Puck," he said, bending forward as if for a confidential chat, "I want you to tell me exactly what happened yesterday morning—I mean about the messages Captain Charlton gave you for Hilda."

She was on the defensive at once, ignorant as to why her father wanted information, and afraid of committing herself in any direction.

"He gave me the messages and I took them. That was all," she answered sullenly.

"But there has been some mistake, and we think that perhaps you could explain it. Did you deliver the messages exactly as you were given them?"

She had almost forgotten that her puppy had eaten Captain Charlton's rose, but she remembered it quickly now, and instantly it flashed into her mind that she ran some risk of being defrauded of the present Captain Charlton had promised her. It took her no appreciable time to make up her mind that wild horses should drag no confession from her, and she offered a front of steel to the enemy.

"He gave you a letter and a rose, didn't he?"

"Well, I suppose that was no harm?"

"That isn't the point, child. Don't imagine you are going to be scolded for carrying the messages. They were perfectly harmless. What I want to know is whether you gave them correctly—whether you meddled with them in any way."

"Not likely. I wouldn't be bothered meddling with Hilda's old love letters. I'm sure they're all stupid nonsense."

"But the rose? What color was it?"

"I didn't notice. He's always sending her flowers. I never knew one from another."

"You took it straight to her? You're sure you didn't drop it?"

"Quite sure. I held on to it tight."

She made this assertion with great relish, for though she did not hesitate to tell a lie when she considered that the occasion demanded one, still she preferred telling the truth, because it seemed a cleverer thing to do. And it was quite true that she had not dropped the rose. Wallypug had snatched it. She had held on so tight that the stem remained in her hand when Wallypug devoured the head of the flower. It was plain that Captain Charlton suspected something wrong, and intended to "back out" of the stipulated reward. A diamond tiara or a tricycle being at stake, it was not to be expected that she should assist him on his road to discovery, and, after a fruitless half-hour, Colonel Weatherley left her, having made no advance towards the solution of the mystery.

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The weeks went on, piling themselves into months, and the battle of Omdurman was fought, and all England read the list of killed and wounded.

The Weatherleys did not talk much about that list, for Captain Everard Charlton's name appeared under the heading "Severely Wounded," and it was tacitly recognized that there might be a limit to Hilda's powers of endurance. Hilda, of course, saw the papers as every one else did, but it was much to her that she was not expected to discuss their contents, even with her garrulous mother. She was thankful for the grace of being allowed to eat her heart out in secret and in silence.

It was one day later on in the autumn when she was not in the room—but Puck was—that Colonel Weatherley told his wife an item of news which had just reached him. Captain Charlton had come home and was with his own people at Richmond. He was making a very slow recovery, and was not expected to be fit for anything for many months; but the glory of a D. S. O., in Colonel Weatherley's opinion, more than compensated for shattered health.

Puck listened and took mental notes. She knew Richmond, having visited friends there more than once. She had plenty of pocket-money, and, most important of all, she had a very bad pain in her conscience. It had been increasing for some time, fed by the sight of Hilda's pale misery; and after the battle of Atbara it had become almost unbearable. Confession at home was not to be thought of; but something must be done, and she regarded this news as her opportunity. Next morning she did not appear at breakfast, and about the time when search was being made for her at home a small unexpected visitor arrived at the Charltons' house.

She had a struggle to obtain permission to see the invalid son, who was the center of care and solicitude to the whole household; but, after much reasoning and imploring, she found herself taken by the hand and led to a room where her old friend was stretched on an immensely long sofa.

"Colonel Weatherley's little girl has come all the way from Aldershot by herself to see you, Everard," said Mrs. Charlton, "and I thought you might like to have her with you for a few minutes. Not if it tires you, of course," she added anxiously.

"It won't tire me," he said, and Puck shook hands with him very gravely. She was very painfully impressed by the ghost of his voice and the ghost of himself, and she longed to get the business of her visit over.

"Please may I see you alone?" she asked, with solemn importance. "I won't let him talk," she assured Mrs. Charlton, "and what I have to say won't take more than five minutes."

"Very well; not more than five minutes, honor bright," said Mrs. Charlton, answering a glance from her son; and she went away, leaving him to Puck and his happy fate.

"I want to make a confession," said Puck, in such a hurry that her words tumbled over each other. "But first you must tell me, had that red rose any meaning? Did it matter whether Hilda got exactly that very one? You mustn't speak, you know. Just nod your head or shake it."

He nodded.

"Well, Hilda never got it. Wallypug snapped it from me and chewed it up; and I picked another rose and took it to her instead. Next morning I knew something had happened, because dad came into my room ever so early and bullied me to tell him what mistake I had made; but I wouldn't tell, because I thought if you found out you would never give me the diamond tiara or the tricycle; and the next thing I heard was that you had gone away to the fighting, so there would have been no good in telling then. Hilda is miserable. She's been miserable all the time. And you're awfully hurt. And perhaps it's all my fault. Is it? Is it? Just nod or shake again."

"What color was the rose?" he asked, with dry lips. "I mean the rose you picked instead of mine."

"It was a yellowish thing. Did the color matter? I never thought of that at the time."

Mrs. Charlton came back and held out her hand to lead Puck away.

"Mother," he said, "I want you to send a telegram for me, and Puck will stay to lunch."

The telegram was to Colonel Weatherley, and said: "Puck is here, and has explained everything. Will you come to fetch her?"

A midday train brought Puck's father, and he in his turn telegraphed to Hilda.

It was late in the afternoon when she arrived, and what happened after that needs no telling.

* * * * * *

Early in the new year there was a wedding, at which Puck was chief bridesmaid, although she did not deserve to be; and the bridegroom, whose income was not sufficient to compass a diamond tiara, gave her the most delightful tricycle she could have imagined in her wildest dreams.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

The Obvious Answer.

Washington Star.

"Father," said the juvenile knowledge seeker, "what is a state of insurrection?"

And without hesitation came the answer: "Kentucky, my son."

No Substitute.

Philadelphia North American.

The Missionary—Why do you drink this awful liquor?

Hungry Ned—By gosh, parson, it's the only licker in the camp. We have to.

Misplaced.

Life.

"John has been one of the officers of the Foreign Missionary Society for ten years, and is as poor as ever."

"Well, I always said he wasn't fitted for that work."

A Run on the Banks.

Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"When Buller is doing nothing else he can work up a little financial amusement."

"How?"

"By cashing his checks on the banks of the Tugela."

The Uncertainty Ended.

Harper's Bazar.

"Now honestly, Maud, didn't Jack propose last evening?"

"Why, ye-e-es! But how did you guess?"

"I noticed that you didn't have that worried look this morning."

He Knew.

Philadelphia Press.

Pastor—I supose you know where the bad little boys go?

Johnny (who has been told to stay in the house)—Yes, I do. They go skatin' and sleddin' and have a jolly good time.

Two Necessaries.

Life.

"In Utah," said Mr. Cumso, "it is not enough to obtain a plurality of votes to get into Congress."

"What else is needed?" asked Mr. Cawker.

"A singularity of wives."

Sorry the Day.

Judge.

Jaggles—What did your friend mean when he said this country would have been better off if there had never been any negroes here?

Waggles—I suppose he meant we wouldn't have had any coon songs.

He Meant All Right.

Harlem Life.

Miss Fisher—I really don't think I shall take part again in the theatricals. I always feel as though I were making a fool of myself.

Pilkins (who always says the wrong thing)—Oh, everybody thinks that.

Changed Conditions.

Judge.

Father—That man should be an example to you, my son. He entered a store as office boy and worked himself up until in a few years he owned the business.

Son—He could never do that in these days, pa, when they have cash registers.

A Personal Grievance.

Ohio State Journal.

Riggs—I don't know what Brown does with his money. Yesterday he was short and he is short again to-day.

Briggs—Did he want to borrow from you?

Riggs—No, hang it, I wanted to borrow from him.

Kindred Shocks.

Harper's Bazar.

"Why so downcast, Jack? You look as blue as an English general."

"Say, Dick, did you ever have a girl you were sure loved you turn you down when you proposed?"

"No; but I've been hit in the ear with a snowball."

In Kentucky.

Life.

Rodney—Lorenzo, didn't I see a suit of old Japanese-armor hanging on your studio wall the other day?

Lorenzo—Yes; what about it?

"Lend it to me for a few days. I've got to be best man at a wedding down in Kentucky."

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

Lights dot the coast line of Great Britain at the rate of one to every fourteen miles.

Out of 1,548,654 votes polled in the recent election in Mexico only 92,172 were against Diaz.

The rose was an emblem of immortality among the Syrians, and the Chinese planted it over graves.

The army death rate is lower in Great Britain than in any other country. In France it is nearly six times as high.

At the battle of Hastings, A. D. 1066, the weapons being swords and battle axes, 500 fell fatally wounded out of every 1,000 soldiers.

President Anderson, of the Southern Mormon mission field, says there are 1,300 Mormons in South Carolina and 10,000 in eleven Southern States.

Rainy days are particularly despised by the telephone girls, because more people stay indoors, and as a consequence the work is almost doubled.

Wigs were in vogue in Rome toward the end of the republic, and so well made that Ovid says: "Nobody could tell if any one else's hair was real or not."

Canada is self-supporting, but in event of an attack being made upon the Dominion Great Britain would have to provide both army and navy for its defense.

About 50 per cent. more business is being done in the United States, as measured by that reliable test, the volume of bank clearings, than was done in 1892.

Russia's Asiatic possessions are three times the size of Great Britain's, but hold only 23,000,000 inhabitants, as compared with England's 297,000,000 subjects.

In the Crimea the British left 60,000 corpses, which are interred in 130 cemeteries on ground occupied by the troops during that long and disastrous war.

It is announced that the French government, looking out for a new source of revenue, has determined to plant fruit trees all along the public high roads of France.

Germany now occupies the position which the United States for many years enjoyed, being second to England in ocean steam transportation. Germany has obtained this position in the short period of ten years.

The work of reforesting Pennsylvania has been well begun. Thus far 60,000 acres at the headwaters of the principal rivers have been purchased by the State, and 40,000 more will soon come into its possession.

A Boston cemetery company has decided to exclude automobiles from its burying ground lest the horseless vehicles should cause runaways, which might create havoc among the tombstones and monuments.

An automobile that costs when new $3,000 sold at auction recently in Paris for $13,200 after making a fast record. It appears, comments the Trotter and Pacer, that developed speed is valuable in machines as well as in horses.

Ladies of high class in China use the daintiest thimbles imaginable, some of them being carved from enormous pearls, ornamented with bands of fine gold, on which all manner of quaint and fantastic designs are engraved.

The ratio of men to women among the public school teachers in Massachusetts is 1 to 10.2. During the first half of the past decade the number of men kept relatively diminishing, during the last half it has been relatively increasing.

There are not less than twenty-five colonies of Hebrews, most of them thriving and self-supporting, in Judea, Samaria, Upper Galilee and in trans-Jordanic regions, with a total of 4,500 colonists and about 1,000 hired Hebrew laborers.

The manufacture and use of false teeth is undoubtedly a practice of great antiquity. The ancient Egyptians were no mean dentists. Jaw bones of mummies have been found with false teeth in them and also with teeth filled with gold.

Illiteracy in Russia exceeds that of any other country claiming to have a civilized government. In 10,000 villages of the vast empire there is not a school, and it is estimated that not 20 per cent. of the population of the empire has acquired even the rudiments of a common school education.

The spectacle of the ibis thoroughly domesticated on a pool within the city limits of Los Angeles is suggestive of the mild winters of that region, as the ibis is a tropical bird. These birds were introduced several years ago and live there perfectly contented.

A significant sign of the part Japan hopes to play in the future in China is that the Japanese government has definitely offered to establish a military academy at Peking to educate Chinese under Japanese officers. It is believed China is favorably disposed toward this proposition.

In the laundry of an insane asylum at Pontiac, Mich., electric irons, instead of gas irons, have proved to be peculiarly adapted for insane-asylum service where most of the work is done by the patients. There is no chance of their setting anything on fire with the irons.

The town of McAlester, in the Indian Territory, has a population of more than seven thousand, all of them squatters, who hope that eventually the federal government will ratify their title to the property of which they have taken possession. They have no mayor, no town marshal, no aldermen, no police.

Buller's Belated Medal.

Westminster Gazette.

A curious incident occurred at General Buller's home only the other day. A parcel was delivered addressed Gen. Sir Redvers Buller, G. C. B., V. C., which when opened revealed another package addressed Capt. Redvers Buller, fourth battalion King's Royal Rifles. This was found to contain a medal with three clasps given for the Red river expedition. The Red river expedition was in 1857, was fought against rebels in Canada, and, though bloodless, was admirably organized. Lord Wolseley commanded for the first time and it was General Buller's first campaign. Thirty-three years afterwards! The War Office is evidently set against undue precipitation in the distribution of decorations.

Gifts.

I stood where gifts were showered on men from heaven,
And some had honors and the joy thereof;
And some received with solemn, radiant faces
The gift of love.

The green I saw of bay-leaves, and of laurel,
Of gold the gleam.
A voice spoke to me, standing empty-handed,
"For thee—a dream."

Forbear to pity, ye who richly laden
Forth from the place of heaven's bounty went;
Who marvel that I smile, my hands still empty—
I am content.

Ye cannot guess how dowered beyond the measure
Of your receiving to myself I seem.
Lonely and cold, I yet pass on enraptured—
I have my dream.

—Anne Reeve Aldrich.